Message Text

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R 011515Z MAR 77 FM AMEMBASSY QUITO TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3357 INFO AMEMBASSY MEXICO AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL

CONFIDENTIAL QUITO 1335

E.O. 11652: GDS TAGS: ELAB, EC

SUBJECT: CEOSL CONGRESS

1. CEOSL, THE AIFLD-SUPPORTED ECUADOREAN CONFEDERATION OF FREE LABOR ORGANIZATIONS, HELD ITS SEVENTH ORDINARY CONGRESS IN QUITO FEB. 25-27. THE CONGRESS, WHICH SAW THE RE-ELECTION OF SECRETARY GENERAL JOSE CHAVEZ AS THAT ORGANIZATION'S CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER (NOW PRESIDENT), CONTAINED FEW SURPRISES. ONE OF THE HIGH POINTS WAS A STIRRING ADDRESS BY ORIT SECRETARY GENERAL JULIO ETCHEVERRY ON FEB. 26 IN WHICH HE STRONGLY DEFENDED DEMOCRATIC TRADE UNION PRINCIPLES AND ATTACKED THE MILITARY GOVERNMENTS OF LATIN AMERICA, INCLUDING THAT OF ECUADOR, THAT DENY TRUE TRADE UNION FREEDOM.

- 2. THE MOST IMPORTANT ITEMS ACHIEVED BY THE CONGRESS WERE:
- -- THE RESURECTION OF THE OFFICE OF PRESIDENT AS THE PRINCIPAL EXECUTIVE OFFICE;
- -- THE REDUCTION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL FROM 18 TO 13 MEMBERS; AND

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- -- THE ENDORSEMENT OF A SHARPLY LIMITED FORM OF UNITY OF ACTION WITH THE COUNTRY'S OTHER TRADE UNION CONFEDERATIONS.
- 3. THE NEW MEMBERS OF THE CEOSL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL REPRESENT A GENERAL QUALITATIVE IMPROVEMENT OVER THE FORMER MEMBERSHIP AND APPEAR TO INDICATE AN INCREASE IN INFLUENCE

OF THE ORGANIZATION'S GUAYAQUIL BASED AFFILIATES. IT APPEARS LIKELY THAT THE NEW EXECUTIVE COUNCIL WILL BE MORE ABLE AND MORE INCLINED TO MONITOR MORE CLOSELY THE ACTIVITIES OF JOSE CHAVEZ THAN WAS THE PREVIOUS COUNCIL, SINCE ONLY THREE OF THE THIRTEEN MEMBERS ARE BEHOLDEN TO HIM. ALSO, THE NEW COUNCIL SERVED NOTICE THAT IT WILL ACCEPT JOINT ACTIVITIES WITH THE OTHER CONFEDERATIONS (NAMELY, THE COMMUNIST CTE AND MARXIST CHRISTIAN CEDOC) ON TRUE TRADE UNION ISSUES BUT THAT IT WILL OPPOSE POLITI-CAL UNITY WITH THE OTHER CONFEDERATIONS. ALSO, THE CONGRESS, IN PLENARY SESSION, REFUSED TO EVEN CONSIDER CEOSL'S JOIN-ING THE OTHER TWO CONFEDERATIONS IN FORMING ONE SINGLE UNITED CONFEDERATION. THAT MOVE HAD BEEN FAVORED BY THE GOE AND BY THE MARXIST DOMINATED CONFEDERATIONS. JOSE CHAVEZ HAS FROM TIME TO TIME CONSIDERED THE IDEA BUT THE STRONG FEELINGS EXPRESSED IN THE CONGRESS HAVE LIKELY CONVINCED HIM THAT THIS IS HARDLY THE TIME FOR SUCH ACTION. BLOOMFIELD

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